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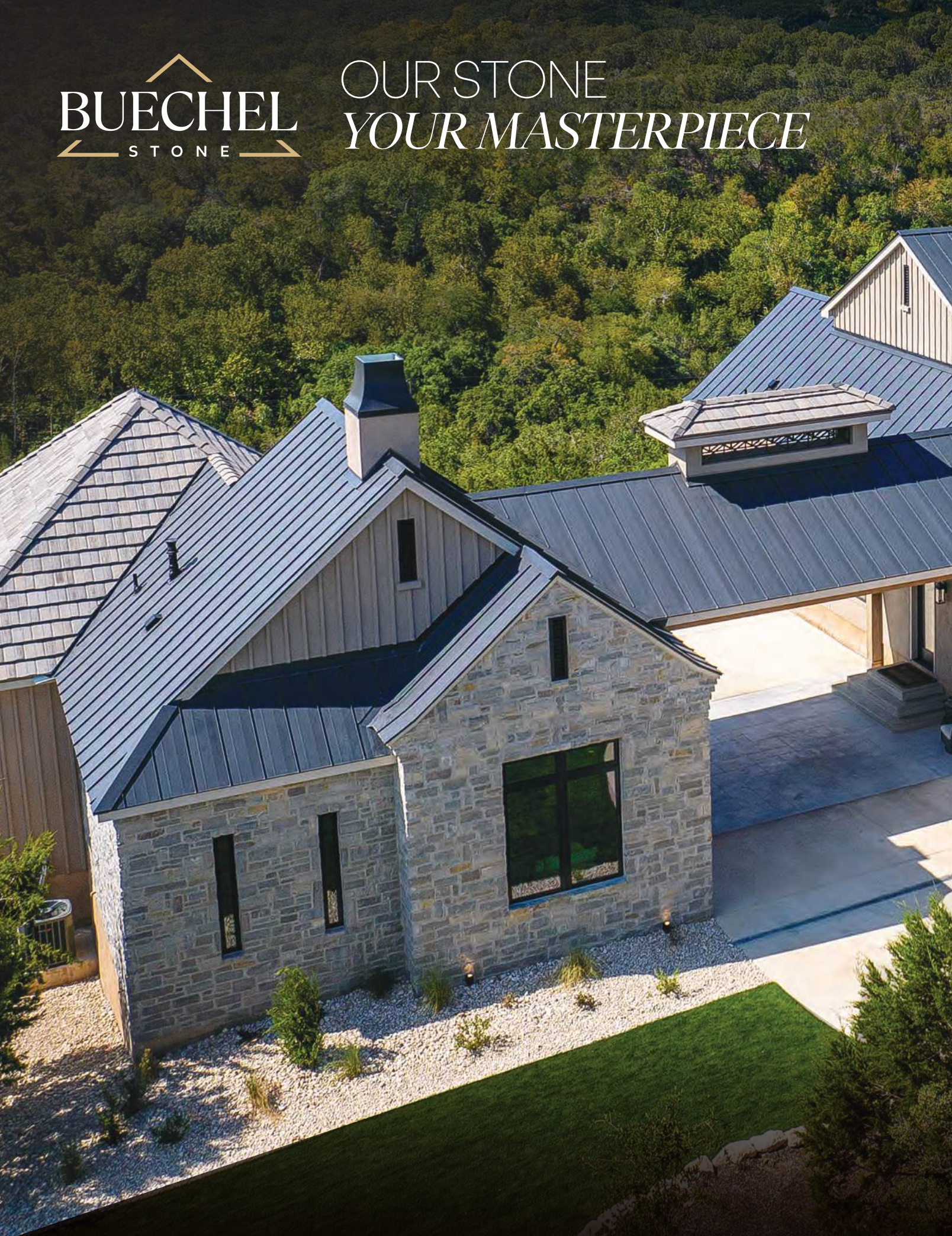


WAINSCOTT
BY JEFFREY BERNETT

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ISSUE 1

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A fresh perspective

For those of us who wear glasses the options are endless.

In my family, my brother visits a local optician (whom he's known since high school) every couple of years and chooses three pairs; he then proceeds to call for a family meeting. One by one, he tries each pair on in a deliberate model-esque peekaboo fashion, creating a narrative "bit." Sounds corny, but we all know it for what it is and have grown to love and appreciate the ritual over the years. Only one pair makes the cut.

It's said that a person's eyes are the window to the soul – a metaphoric expression and one that I, on the other hand, have embraced. And beyond, way beyond! If our eyes are a window to the soul, then what are glasses but a curtain window treatment away from creating a new frame of mind?

I've come to appreciate glasses as a tried-and-true mood changer, akin to other accessories when introduced, like a purse or a pair of shoes. I'm all about the shuffle and the fresh interpretations, but it has not eluded me that once we design our homes, flexibility is a bit more complicated and challenging. Sure, upending pillows and

rearranging the objets d'art on a shelf usually satisfies the "itch I so often need to scratch." You get my sentiment. If our moods and prowess morph as the seasons change, then our spaces should be just as adaptable!

Our spring issue features designers who embrace the adaptability of space. Marie Uzeel (p 72) considers her home a finished project but remains open to change. Sculptor Lucille Lewin (p 88) resists hanging paintings, ascribing to "they're designed to move." And Sean Leffers (p 34) embraces versatility through textiles.

One of my new favorite television shows is "St. Denis Medical." The cast of characters are charmingly off-kilter, and I'm reminded of one scene where the hospital administrator "prefers to see the world through rose-colored glasses, not through Turd goggles."

All in all, not a bad sentiment. I'm going to go with that!

Amy Sneider
amy.sneider@aspiredh.com

FENDI

CASA





THIS PAGE: **DUNKE DESIGN** p104 ON THE COVER: **THE HOME OF MARGARET WOERMANN** Photography Sven Alberding, Production Elsa Young p27

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CREMA, ITALY

This creative old farmhouse is home to artist and designer Emanuela Crotti and features original fresco-drenched walls and windows that allow sunlight to proffer a natural glow. As much creator as collector, Crotti's home reflects her talents and passions.

Giandomenico Frassi

This contemplative living room features a 1950s armchair reupholstered with natural patterned fabrics. A cast-iron radiator serves as the base for a bookcase; objects like heads and hands collected over Crotti's years of travel complete the vignette.

P E R E N N I A L S



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Courtesy of the artist and Lehmann Maupin, New York, Seoul and London. © 2024 Cecilia Vicuña/Artist Rights Society (ARS), New York. Photo by Daniel Kulla.



CECILIA VICUÑA
Santa Bárbara
2024, oil on
canvas,
28" w x 69" h

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“IN DESIGN,
AS IN LIFE,
TRAVEL SERVES
AS A GENTLE
CORRECTION TO
THE LIMITS OF
OUR IMAGINATION,
INVITING US TO
BORROW, ADAPT
AND REFINE IDEAS
FROM THE WORLD
BEYOND OUR
DOORSTEP.”
SEAN LEFFERS

AIX-EN-PROVENCE, FRANCE
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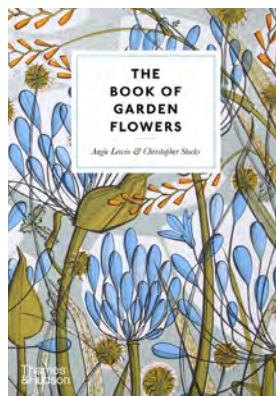


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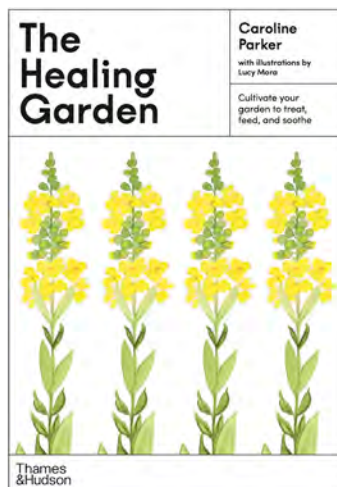
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“My most recent works are based on birds – and flight. There’s a powerful desire for freedom I think we all experience the first time we see birds in the sky. We all wish we could fly – right?”

– Toots Zynsky



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Toots Suite

Zynsky’s undulating vessels, inspired by birds, are composed of fused glass threads.

Q&A

Artist **Toots Zynsky** was a student of nature from her early years, and that thoughtful connection has long come through in her work. For the *Past/Present* exhibition at Heller Gallery, the artist brought together pieces spanning 40 years of her career for what she describes as a “partially retrospective show.”

aspire: Tell us about these pieces and how this showing took shape.

Toots Zynsky: I had almost never saved examples of my own work because I was always making more, but a friend suggested I should think about earmarking pieces for my children. So as my children reached a certain age, I let them choose favorites for their birthdays and Christmas. These pieces eventually grew into an archive. All of the earlier works, save one, are from their archive. The recent works are from research I have been pursuing based on endangered species of birds.

aspire: How do we see nature come through in your work and in these pieces in particular?

TZ: I was very fortunate to have grown up for my entire childhood in the midst of a natural wonderland – woodlands, streams and ponds giving way to an extensive marshland located on an important North Atlantic migratory flyway for waterfowl. They were safe there. My parents were serious conservationists, and all the kids in the neighborhood learned to revere the wildlife and natural beauty. Inevitably, that has manifested itself over the years in my work.

aspire: What is next for you creatively?

TZ: I’m currently still very busy, through my work and lectures, with bringing attention to the vast diminishment of bird populations around the world. They are, after all, our “canaries in the mine.” I trust that I, and my work, will continue to evolve and change. – JQ

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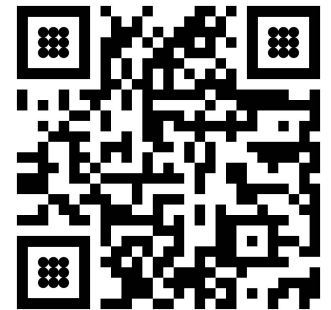
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on the cover

Cultural Anthropologist

TEXT MANDY ALLEN PHOTOGRAPHY SVEN ALBERDING PRODUCTION ELSA YOUNG

For lovers of intriguing spaces, a visit to Margaret Woermann's Cape Town home is akin to opening a present where spaces enchant with an explosion of color and a lifetime of collective African craft and artworks



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Farmstead, eccentric and bohemian. Words that, it turns out, are wholly accurate when applied to Margaret Woermann's Cape Town home. Born and raised in an insulated rural farming community to a German-immigrant family, Woermann, thanks to strong artistic ability, a distinctive eye and unrelenting determination, went on to establish herself as an acclaimed ceramist and one of the best-known names in the South African design landscape as the owner of the craft collective Heartworks.

Woermann's home, dating to 1904 and situated on a large property, is informed in both atmosphere and aesthetics by her formative years on the farm with textures that err on the side of humble and organic. Her position in the design industry allows a certain advantage in picking the best work by some of South Africa's most exciting new talents and established artists, which explains the presence of the contemporary artworks that lend a modern dynamism to the visual tapestry of the interiors.

Woermann's profound knowledge includes each and every maker that has its roots everywhere from South Africa and neighboring Namibia, Zimbabwe, Eswatini (Swaziland), Mozambique and Botswana to further afield in Central, West and East Africa.

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CHILEAN ARTIST CECILIA VICUÑA SEEKS NOTHING LESS THAN TO RETURN US TO OUR COSMIC NATURE THROUGH HER ART

This past fall, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles awarded Chilean-born artist, poet, filmmaker and activist Cecilia Vicuña the inaugural Eric and Wendy Schmidt Environmental and Art Prize, established to provide, according to the museum, “support to develop a commissioned project addressing the critical intersections of art, climate change and environmental justice.” (Artist Julian Charrière also won.)

Wasting no time, Vicuña, now 77, flew to Chile to continue her work of over six decades: organizing with communities around the world – especially those of Indigenous cultures – to envisage art that raises awareness about the environment, specifically in this case, the right to clean water. It has been a busy few years for Vicuña, with solo exhibitions at the Guggenheim in New York, Tate Modern in London and Museo de Bellas Artes in Santiago, as well as a second solo show at her New York gallery, Lehmann Maupin.

In June there will be a solo exhibition at Xavier Hufkens in Brussels and, come November, one at the Irish Museum of Modern Art in Dublin. Maupin’s *La Migranta Blue Nipple* show synthesized much of what Vicuña has been thinking about her whole life and is now codifying in book form with her partner, Jim O’Hern. (They are currently seeking a publisher.)

One work in *La Migranta* was a combined *quipu-precario* installation in which Vicuña regenerated the ancient Andean systems of knotted threads (*quipu*) that recorded statistics and held knowledge, while precariously suspending fragile found objects amid the knots as a way to challenge Western notions of permanence. Another area showcased oil paintings of Orishas, Yoruban deity forces, that recreate drawings she made in the mid-1970s while submersing herself in the religious practices of Amazon peoples.

All dovetail with the book concept, which explores the moment when the Minoan civilization perished and, in its wake, the mutual respect between female and male energies somehow split. This cataclysm separated our humanness from its cosmic nature, essentially a mother consciousness harmonious with creation and fertility inextricably bound to the wisdom of plants, seas, mountains and other “blood knowledge” of the universe. “From an Indigenous art perspective,” Vicuña explains, “artmaking is another form of inscription in the energy field, a parallel history or record we access in the encounter or through art arising from ritual.”

What eventually arises out of the MOCA prize will be another “inscription in the energy field,” part and parcel of Vicuña’s epic ambition to pivot the world’s consciousness back to its cosmic nature. “If we are to survive the current violence and dehumanization in the world and create peace for all, we need to migrate to a new state of mind and soul,” she adds. – JORGE S. ARANGO



CECILIA VICUÑA
La Migranta Blue Nipple
November 21, 2024 – January 11, 2025
Lehmann Maupin New York



RETURN *TO MOTHER*

Interior Design: Christine Markatos Design
Photography: Manolo Langis

In a home architecturally rooted in tradition, designer Christine Markatos Lowe has spent two decades setting the scene for a family to blossom and grow. The ongoing interiors project has evolved along the course of the ever-changing lives and practices of the homeowners and their children, adapting to their tastes and lifestyles as they moved through the years together. "I had just started getting into this maximalist, layered design," Markatos Lowe describes of the more recent decorative edits, noting her longtime client was right on board with the new direction.

In the early days of their collaboration, Markatos Lowe worked on the kitchen and family room, as well as setting up guest and children's rooms in the 17,000-square-foot, Italianate-style home. But once the children were all of school age, the homeowners and designer began to really study the way the different spaces in the home were being used. Spaces for entertaining family and friends, and hosting events for charities and the children's schools, were prioritized equally to the pleasures of everyday living. "This home really became a place for her community," Markatos Lowe explains. "With that evolution, and the evolution of the family itself, the rooms and the functions of the rooms had to shift."

Among those transitions were the morphing of a rarely used dining room into a screening room, the enclosing of a loggia to create a year-round entertaining space and the transformation of a family room into a salon, where the wife hosts friends for mahjong and dessert is often served for larger events. Antiques that have been with the homeowners since an earlier property in Malibu are peppered throughout the home and mix at every turn with items and decoration spanning centuries – from a Murano glass chandelier and hand-painted de Gournay wallpaper to a 15th-century chimneypiece and the custom-designed screen that adorns it.

"What I've been enjoying doing with all our design projects is this transitional idea ... keeping this very traditional architecture and creating tension," Markatos Lowe notes, pointing to her use of more modern fabric on antique furnishings and to the entry hall's custom-designed contemporary table, the top for which is inset with a more traditional eglomise pattern. "We were working to juxtapose materials and silhouettes, and to keep it very moody and ethereal," the designer reflects. "I believe the best homes are about experiences – what you feel as you move from room to room. This house truly captures that sense." – JENNIFER QUAIL

Evolutionary Design

Christine Markatos Lowe takes a decades-long creative journey with a trusted client in Santa Monica



FOYER Designed by Los Angeles architect Lewin Wertheimer, the vision for the grand staircase was to keep the curve and sweep of it light. A stenciled ceiling – custom designed by CMD and implemented by Scott Flax Studio – amplifies the dramatic entryway. Flooring: Quartzite Perla & Quartzite Cielo slab cut into pavers; Table: Custom by CMD with eglomise top; Chandelier: Negresco Chandelier - 301 by Helene Aumont; Settee: sourced from C. Mariani Antiques, covered in Holland & Sherry Andes fabric in Moonlight with custom de Gournay embroidery; Mirror: CMD custom design sourced by Carcaci LTD; Sconces: Paul Ferrante - Knuckle #1003.

SITTING ROOM Creating tension between the historic and the new, Markatos Lowe designed a palm fire screen for the 15th-century Istrian stone marriage chimneypiece from Jamb Ltd. Coffee table: Vintage chinoiserie panel with new table base; Area rug: Mark Nelson Abaca area rug; Side chairs: Pair of Italian Louis XVI-style painted and parcel gilt Bergères from Kevin Stone Antiques & Interiors with Casamance Attrait Vert fabric.



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MELROSE HOUSE

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photo from the book **Rose Tarlow : Three Houses**

New textile collections spark reflection on the importance of cultural exploration in creativity

By Jennifer Quail

Sean Leffers is no stranger to blending global influences into his life and work. So when the designer and collector set out to develop his own textiles collections, his inspiration reached around the globe to locales he has frequented and loved. The collections – *Between Heaven & Earth* and *In the Shadow of Merapi* – bring in stylistic references stemming from journeys to Japan, Java and beyond, and honor the time-honored practices that bring the textiles to life.

aspire design and home sat down with Leffers and our intrepid *Designer Travels* columnist Laurie Blumenfeld to discuss the origins of these patterns and the importance of travel in design.

Q&A

Jennifer Quail: The origin story of these collections speaks to the importance of history, travel and cultural exploration. Tell us how one small scrap of antique fabric morphed into these collections. **Sean Leffers:** I began collecting fabric fragments years ago, sourcing them from antique markets, auctions and specialty dealers. One of those finds became the starting point for the design we now call Countess Ayakura. It was a thin, fragile piece of fabric lining the back of an Edo-period tansu chest I bought in Kyoto – a subtle detail that hinted at its deeply-rooted Japanese heritage.

Textiles like this carry a story that transcends borders and time. The peony motif of Countess Ayakura, while firmly embedded in Japanese culture, has its origins in China and has taken on different meanings as it moved across regions. This fabric is part of a larger narrative about how textiles, techniques and symbols travel and adapt, shaped by the cultures they encounter. They remind us that even the most deeply rooted designs are part of an ongoing, fluid exchange between past and present, place and people.

JQ: This is your first foray into designing textiles, but you were already a collector. Tell us why textiles hold a special place for you.

SL: Textiles are among the most intimate and universal forms of human creativity. They exist at the meeting point of the practical and the poetic – something we touch, wear and live with every day, yet also something capable of carrying profound meaning. To collect textiles is to collect fragments of history – woven, dyed and stitched into something tangible and lasting.

JQ: Why are travel and exploration important to design and to creativity in general? **SL:** Travel and exploration are crucial to design and creativity because they reveal the profound variety of ways people have addressed the universal challenges of life – how to build, adorn and make meaning. To encounter a distant culture or landscape is to be reminded of the vast reservoir of human ingenuity and recognize that our own assumptions about beauty or function are just one possibility among many. **Laurie Blumenfeld:** Travel is the most important part of my design process. Each trip I take, whether it's to Asia, Europe, South America or Africa, becomes part of my design psyche. Each country is brimming with colors and textures, history and cultural nuances that influence how I see the world and design – furniture, objects, fabrics and more. Travel creates a heightened awareness of other cultures and societies as it expands one's appreciation for other cultures. And through design, I can express my appreciation.



COUNTESS AYAKURA

SL: The fabric is made from slubbed linen and features a peony motif, a symbol of prosperity, honor and bravery in Japanese culture. It is created using a discharge and block printing process: The base dye is carefully removed to reveal the intricate pattern, and additional layers are added with hand-carved wooden blocks. The result is a fabric with a texture and depth that feels timeless.

TAIYO TO TETSU

LB: The black-and-white palette with intricate details in a repeat pattern is chic and sophisticated. The Japanese influence makes it striking.





RUTENG

LB: I was immediately drawn to Ruteng. To me, it represents the colorful Indonesian textiles, but in a more refined scale, and with beautiful details. I love the neutral, rich colors mixed with black.

JQ: How do you like to use textiles in your interior design projects? **LB:** There are so many possibilities! An over-scale graphic fabric can make a unique statement piece as a wall hanging. Indigenous fabrics made into a duvet cover will completely change a room. Upholstering furniture in a travel-discovered fabric is also a magnificent way to create a moody, global vibe.

JQ: What are some of your favorite places to search for textiles around the globe? **LB:** India, Morocco, South Africa and Cambodia.

JQ: What do you hope designers and homeowners will feel and think about when they experience this collection? **SL:** I hope this collection invites designers and homeowners to pause and reflect on the layers of history and craft embedded in the textiles. Each piece carries with it the trace of a place, a time and a set of hands – reminding us that even the most functional objects have their origins in acts of creativity and care. I want people to feel a connection to the stories woven into the fabrics, to sense the dialogue between past and present, and to recognize how design links us to something larger than ourselves.

"I was immediately struck by Sean's experience in India, meeting with the textile artisans. I was recently in India and shared that same experience! I appreciate how he has used the classic patterns often used in rural parts of India, Morocco and Indonesia and reimagined them to feel contemporary, yet with a strong nod to their history."

— Laurie Blumenfeld



Original historic details, like conservatory windows and deep wood moldings, lend extravagance to this charming room that speaks to the surrounding nature. To complement and preserve the decorative history of the space, designer Bethany Adams designed custom millwork and had it painted the same Benjamin Moore Garden Oasis hue as the walls, ceiling and radiator covers. The enveloping vibe is made complete with a sofa from Interior Define dressed in lush green velvet and the duck egg blue leather by Moore & Giles selected to recover the husband's great-grandfather's Sleepy Hollow armchair, breathing new life into a family heirloom.

J. Jordan Photography



Paolo Pallucco & Mireille Rivier

W il Toro 1

Sideboard, 1982
Pallucco Roma edition
32.3"H x 45.3"W x 16.9"D

Scene-stealing sculpture meets functional furniture in this cabinet that's as antitraditional as the era in which it was designed. Two levels of storage make it useful; an off-kilter appearance renders it a conversation piece.

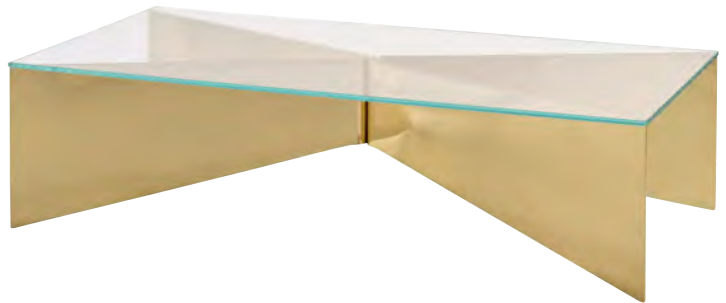
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Baker Luxe Collection

LAYLA

Cocktail table

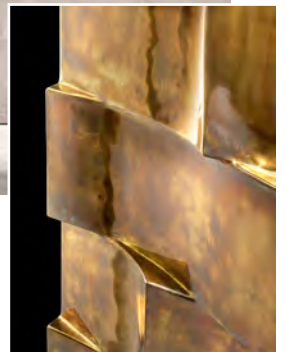
Two geometric brass sections join to form the base of the Layla Cocktail Table. With a design reminiscent of an envelope, the sculptural base stays in the spotlight, as viewed through a Starphire glass top. bakerfurniture.com



Superfici Venice Collection by Materica

STACK by Antonio Pio Saracino.

This three-dimensional, refined metal boiserie sets an enveloping stage where sculptural forms overlap and merge in seemingly endless evolution. As the name STACK implies, the accumulation and layering of the panels relay an ever-growing story. materica.eu





Bridget Riley

Portrait of the British artist Bridget Riley, 1964 (b/w photo), Riley, Bridget (b.1931) Private Collection.

MATERIAL-IMPACT

Oeuvre in Black & White

Honoring the 60th anniversary of Bridget Riley's inclusion in the 1965 exhibition *The Responsive Eye* at New York's Museum of Modern Art, Hazlitt Holland-Hibbert has curated a showing featuring a selection of the artist's black-and-white paintings and drawings dating from 1961 to 1966.

The works stem from a period of inventive experimentation for Riley. The artist began her creative plunge into the pure abstraction of a limited palette of black and white in 1961 and continued that aesthetic study until 1966, when she welcomed red and blue into her work. Her inclusion in the MoMA exhibition at this stage was a watershed moment for the artist's career and international reputation. Amplifying the honor, her work *Current* (1964) was featured on the catalogue cover and curator William C. Seitz singled Riley out in his catalogue essay.

The vocabulary Riley worked to establish during these influential years addressed the manipulation and combination of fundamental shapes to trigger internal patterns of seeing. These are the principles that have supported her ongoing creative output through to today,



Bridget Riley. *Pause*, 1964, emulsion on board, 44" x 42".

and the Hazlitt Holland-Hibbert exhibit provides insight into this important period.

The new exhibition was curated with the support of Riley and her studio. It includes six black-and-white paintings on loan from private collections - *Horizontal Vibrations [First Version]* (1961), *Black to White Discs* (1962), *Burn* (1964), *Pause* (1964), *White Discs 2* (1964), and *Blaze 4* (1964) – that will be displayed alongside related works on paper.

Bridget Riley: The Responsive Eye
May 5 – May 16, 2025
Hazlitt Holland-Hibbert
17 East 76th Street #2, New York
hh-h.com



Promemoria AGHARTI

Cabinet design by Davide Sozzi

Named for the legendary kingdom that Tibetan tradition says lies beneath the Earth's surface, the terracotta-accented Agharti cabinet is an homage to hidden natural forces. A rhythmic, bubbling pattern of circles within squares evokes animated geometry within an inanimate object. promemoria.com



Leftover Bench

South African Inspiration

In a studio set among the Northern California redwoods, South Africa-born furniture designer Hanneke Lourens creates contemporary, handmade, sculptural pieces using traditional woodworking techniques. Though a resident of California for nearly a decade, Lourens continues to draw inspiration from her roots – always working to weave the spirit and vibrancy of South Africa into her work.

Her debut collection is a tribute to her homeland and to her fascination with the permanence of wood, the precision it demands, and the creativity it can deliver. Consisting of five pieces, the Corrugated Collection is inspired by the abundance of corrugated metal sheets found in the urban landscapes of South Africa. The designs employ white oak to mimic the flowing curves of this globally-used and -recognized building material, and then juxtapose those fluid shapes with hard geometric lines. hannekelourens.com

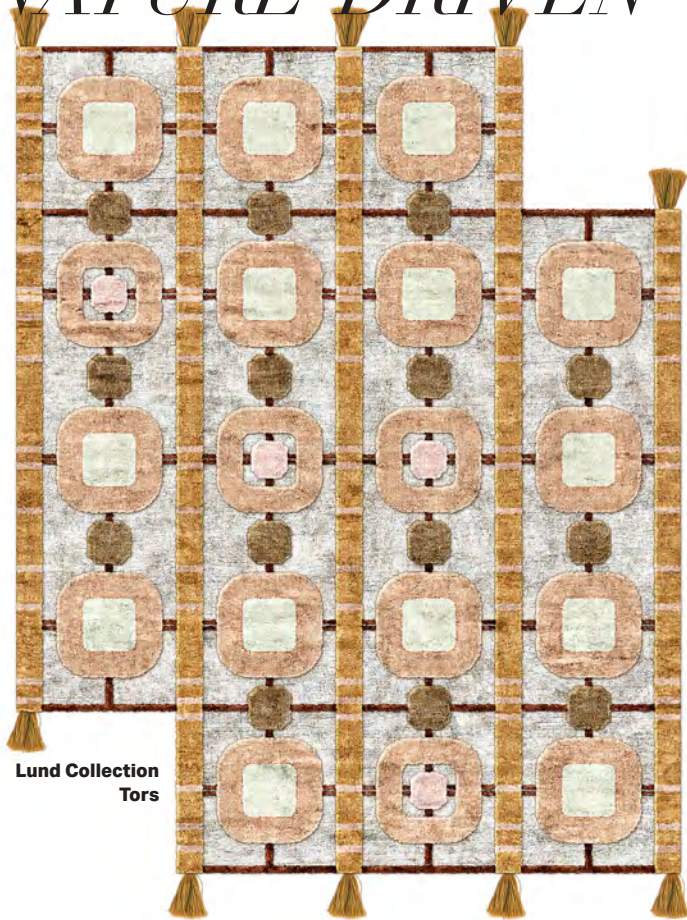
Carini Carpets

Reimagining botanical motifs in contemporary forms, Carini Carpets brings a new collection of floral-inspired rug designs into play. Building on their mission to create soulful, sustainable, timeless pieces, the collection places a modern lens on delicate vine-like patterns, oversize blooms and abstract interpretations of nature. carinicarpet.com



Tree and Cloud, Persimmon, 100 knot wool, silk 8' 2" x 9' 11"

NATURE-DRIVEN



Lund Collection
Tors

JD STARON

Striking a balance between timeless craftsmanship and innovative design, the Lund Collection from JD Staron pairs the simple, functional beauty of Bauhaus design with the rich heritage of Swedish rug weaving. The collection blends traditional flat weaving techniques with plush pile and striking pattern, reimagining classic methods and motifs for modern living. jdstaron.com



Jiun Ho Privé
Piedra Swivel Chair
with upholstered base.
Top fabric: JG Switzer-
Wood Dragon Wool-Dark
with special beading
seat fabric: Jiun
Ho Textile-Mixteca
Almendra, 1115-06

JIUN HO

Celebrating memory, place and imagination, the Mixteca Collection from Jiun Ho is inspired by the vibrant landscapes and cultural heritage of Mexico and the artistry of the Mixtec “People of the Rain.” The performance textiles are designed for indoor and outdoor settings, and pair rich cactus greens and ocean blues with earthy neutrals and Jiun Ho’s signature gold tones to evoke natural occurrences like cloud movements and rain-washed landscapes. jiunho.com

Studio Uwe Gaertner

Cecile Upholstered Bench

The furniture designed by Studio Uwe Gaertner aims to achieve two seemingly incompatible qualities: glamour and simplicity. The Cecile Upholstered Bench carries out that agenda via black-stained solid oak paired with a brushed fabric that together present a sensation of refined elegance. uweguertner.de

**PALOS
VERDES
ESTATES**

The entrance to the lounge features a one-of-a-kind, astronaut-inspired sculpture and a large-format canvas by Cologne-based painter, David Uessem.

TEXT THOMAS CONNORS



David Christopher Lee



Anthony Avellano

César Giraldo and a sculptural floor lamp featuring hand-blown glass, from his Gusto capsule collection designed in collaboration with Studio M Lighting.



David Christopher Lee

Kicking back with effortless aplomb, **CÉSAR GIRALDO** embodies the very essence of his design – bold, opulent, and instinctively refined

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PALOS VERDES ESTATES
Custom to the max,
the space features César Giraldo-
designed furniture, millwork
and hardware.

David Christopher Lee

A place for everything and everything in its place. Good design rides on that old adage. Exciting design hits that mark and then some. When Los Angeles-based César Giraldo created a 3,000-square-foot entertainment zone for a client's home in **Palos Verdes Estates**, he didn't hold back. Richly indulgent and almost cinematic in its larger-than-life impact, the space — which includes a theater, wine cellar and whiskey room — puts many a private club to shame.

Giraldo — who grew up in Colombia, where “there was an undeniable sense of magic in everyday life, an intense connection to nature and a deep appreciation for beauty in the unexpected” — turned to a palette of black, gold and bronze to invest this stylish retreat with luminous depth.

“The inspiration stemmed from the idea of creating a space of glamour and elegance, one where my client could not only unwind but also entertain with a sense of joy,” describes Giraldo. “His needs were always at the heart of the process, informing every decision, from textures and furniture to art and accessories, ensuring that the space felt both luxurious and deeply personal.”

When he's not creating bespoke interiors, Giraldo channels his creativity into product design, with the Straight Lines Unexpected Curves rug collection with Mehraban (which earned a 2024 Good Design Award), his Medellín outdoor furniture line for Tidelli and the award-winning Gusto capsule collection in collaboration with Studio M Lighting.

“Every category presents its own challenges, particularly in balancing beauty with functionality,” shares Giraldo. “With each challenge comes growth, and for me, that journey is both exhilarating and rewarding. I love the entire process, from the initial spark of an idea, no matter how unconventional, to the meticulous refinement of the final piece.”

I believe creativity should be boundless, allowing space for exploration and discovery. What excites me most is designing something entirely new, as each project brings invaluable knowledge that I wouldn't have gained otherwise. Beyond that, my design approach is rooted in a deep trust in my instincts and a wholehearted celebration of life. Every day presents an opportunity to create, to refine and to bring spaces to life with emotion and energy. That philosophy guides everything I do.”



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FLORENSE

DESIGN BY

pininfarina

COME to GATHER

Images by Christos J. Palios

The idea took root a decade ago in a central Grecian village, when photographer Christos J. Palios used his phone to snap an image of the thoughtful table spread prepared by his uncle. That quick capture of an enjoyable moment and the introspection it sparked led to *Conversations*, a collection of still life-inspired images that forever preserve a series of real-life, shared meals with family and friends in the States and overseas.

“The act of gathering is unquestionably ingrained in humanity,” Palios reflects, pointing to the long-standing Japanese tea ceremony, which has historically promoted connection and peaceful alliances between host and guest. “In the same spirit,” he notes, “shared meals provide physical and mental nourishment as they reveal traditions and offer opportunity for discourse. Barriers melt away, allowing for deeper reflection and meaningful relationships.”

In each composition, we see food and drink, car keys and cell phones – the very basics of our modern lives existing in harmony. The elements remind us that such intimate and personal gatherings and “conversations” are not strictly things of the past; they can happen still today, even amid all our technology and quick text chats. Equally significant is the visual absence of the humans at the table, an artistic decision that invites the viewer to imagine the dinner guests and the dialogue that enlivened the tablescapes.



Extemporaneous

The Conversations Series



Confabulate

“THE IDEA OF CAPTURING GENUINE MEALS WITH OUR NEW AND UBIQUITOUS DIGITAL ENHANCEMENTS FELT APPROPRIATE AND RELEVANT. IT INSPIRED ME TO CONCEPTUALIZE IMAGES BEYOND BEAUTIFUL FOODSCAPES, REFLECTING THE SHIFTING ZEITGEIST.”

CHRISTOS J. PALIOS

“Audience participation was indeed part of my intent,” the photographer shares. “We each relate to these tables in our own ways, as both host and participant. For me, these scenes are temporal ecosystems into which deeper interaction and imagination can take flight. I hope viewers garner universal value from personal perspectives of memory, travel and living.”

– JENNIFER QUAIL



Furor



Modern History

The past meets a colorful present in a young family's San Francisco Tudor

FOYER The designer describes the handpainted de Gournay wallpaper as "the basis for everything." Wallcovering: de Gournay Chinoiserie – Badminton; Marble flooring: Pietra Fina Marble.



KITCHEN "There was an opportunity to do something more feminine in the kitchen," says the designer. Dramatic Germanic Tudor transom windows open up the new space, offering views of a lush backyard where pink flowers bloom in complement to the tile on the wall and hood. Backsplash tile: Clé Tile – Natural Zellige; Hood tile: Clé Tile – Vintage Rose Zellige; Countertop stone: Taj Mahal Quartzite; Hardware: Sun Valley Bronze.

Interior Design: Leo Cesareo Design
Architecture: Kirley Architects
Builder: Jetton Construction
Photography: Christopher Stark
Styling: Yedda Morrison

It's a time-honored adage that every home tells a story. For a couple intent on raising their young family in a setting rich with both history and happiness, that adage came alive through a thoughtful balance of preservation, palette and personality. The idea was to restore and enhance the defining architectural details and millwork that made their new home special, while ushering it into the today with a joyous burst of color and creativity.

"The home's original stylistic direction was this storybook Germanic Tudor pastiche," recalls interior designer Leo Cesareo. "That's what we leaned into, but with a modern, maximalist, sort of whimsical twist."

As the home is north facing and has a tendency to be dark, the intention was to bring in color and light and to open the home up as much as possible, while still maintaining separate rooms. Among the major structural changes were the repositioning of the kitchen from its central placement to the rear of the home, where light is abundant, and the addition of an entire story at the basement level.

"They wanted that separation of spaces *and* to preserve the architectural details of the interior," explains architect Keith Kirley. "We were building upon and interpreting the existing details to integrate them into the new spaces so that the home felt seamless."

That seamlessness is enhanced by a through-line of color rooted in the dreamy wallcovering that sets the scene in the entry foyer. "That was the main inspiration," Cesareo says of the hand-painted de Gournay selection. "Up close, it has so many colors flowing through it, and you see those colors referenced in different shades of green in the dining room, pinks in the kitchen and blues in the living room."

The completed home is a picture-perfect exercise in how living with history need not look like one is living in the past. "It's cohesive," Cesareo says of the colorful, respectful home. "It works because we were choosing the best of all these elements and understanding this is a house in California, not a manor in Europe. We were allowed to play a little and bring in a bit of fantasy. And that freedom led to something *really special*."

– JENNIFER QUAIL



PARETE

A Mughal Princess

In collaboration with Scottish artist Wendy Morrison, Parete has released a spirited and contemporary take on the classic appeal of chinoiserie with A Mughal Princess. On a shimmering backdrop of metallic sisal, galloping horses, symbolizing strength and freedom, play with graceful cranes, representing long life and happiness, for an ethereal expression of joy. paretewalls.com

CROSS-POLLINATION



Photography by Logan Jackson, courtesy of R & Company.

Nova by Sander Lak

Martin Eisler, Lounge Chair, c. 1955, wood, iron

MAHARAM

Continuing Sander Lak's exploration of color with Maharam's design studio, the Nova textile demonstrates through abstracted motif and exaggerated scale how distinct hues look when placed beside one another. In each of nine colorways – ranging from citrusy brights to dimensional neutrals – five hues dissolve into each other to form a flowing mix and expansive pattern. maharam.com

LORIA MANNÉ

Superbloom wallcovering

The Superbloom wallcovering by Liora Manné is part of the New York-based designer's eco-friendly Kaleidoscope Collection, which also includes rugs and fabrics. Drawing inspiration from mosaic tiles, cultural tapestries and artisanal craftsmanship, the customizable line is created using fibers that are sourced from recycled plastic bottles. lioramanne.com



MAHARAM

Impasto rug by Sonnhild Kestler

Recreating the chromatic studies that Zurich-based designer Sonnhild Kestler enlists in her screen-printing process, the Impasto rug design represents paint pressed across a printing screen through varied, overlapping stripes. Hand-knotted in Nepal of Tibetan wool, Impasto's two colorways draw upon the designer's folklore-informed sensibility. maharam.com

A scenic landscape photograph. In the foreground, a grassy hillside slopes down towards the right, covered in green and yellowish-brown grasses. A cluster of tall, feathery, light-colored ornamental grasses stands prominently on the right side of the hill. In the middle ground, a calm body of water, likely a lake, stretches across the frame. The background is dominated by a large, rugged mountain range with steep, forested slopes. The sky is a pale, hazy blue with some light clouds near the mountain peaks. The overall atmosphere is serene and natural.

Hilary Belle Walker's
Italian lakehouse
personifies storytelling,
sustainability
and a truly singular
design point
of view



TEXT CARA GIBBS

PHOTOGRAPHY HELENIO BARBETTA

AND DEBORAH PIANA AGOSTINETTI

NOSTALGIC by NATURE

ORNAVASSO, ITALY

On the tranquil shores of Lago di Mergozzo, a lake so discreet it feels like Italy's best-kept secret, Hilary Belle Walker has created a retreat that reflects her singular approach to style and sustainability. Known for her trailblazing work with BIVIO, Milan's go-to destination for upscale secondhand fashion, Walker's home is a master class in deliberate design – an enchanting blend of nostalgia, humor and practicality. Her journey to this idyllic haven began with a moment of serendipity. "I stumbled upon this magical lake in 2010 while sneaking away from a wedding near Lago Maggiore," she recalls. "Turning a corner, there it was – tiny, quiet and fairy tale-like." What followed was a seven-year search to find the perfect house, culminating in the discovery of a midcentury treasure in 2018. Instead of chasing trends or gutting its original charm, Walker embraced the home's history, transforming it into a space that feels both personal and timeless.

"I PRIORITIZE
THINGS THAT HAVE
A PAST BUT AREN'T
TOO PRECIOUS,"
WALKER EXPLAINS.
THE RESULT? A
HOME THAT FEELS
ALIVE, PLAYFUL
AND PROFOUNDLY
H U M A N .

Her interiors are a study in contrasts: Vintage ceramics mingle with mustard-yellow blinds, while a palette of green, Bordeaux and gold feels both grounded and whimsical. "There's no gray or black here," she declares. Instead, warmth and personality radiate through every choice – a deliberate departure from the uniformity often seen in modern design. Walker's favorite pieces, from her ex-husband's great-aunt's embroidered sheets to market-found tchotchkes, carry stories. "I prioritize things that have a past but aren't too precious," she explains. The result? A home that feels alive, playful and profoundly human. Despite its curated feel, Walker downplays the notion of perfection.

"It's not about one single aesthetic," she says. "It's a mix – like getting dressed, combining eras and styles keeps things interesting."

Yet the home's charm lies in what was preserved – the striking green tile floors, the cozy paneling and even an accordion-style door in the study (a favorite nap spot), where Walker muses, "the feng shui just works." More than a retreat, her home is an antidote to Milan's fast-paced lifestyle. "Even a single night there is like a reset," she shares. Low-tech by design, the house encourages a slower rhythm, with evenings spent spinning records or watching DVDs. The intimate scale of the home – a stark contrast to sprawling American spaces – adds to

its coziness. "It's small but functional and pleasant," Walker reflects, a nod to Italian ingenuity.

The lakehouse embodies Walker's ethos: design as a narrative. From its sustainable underpinnings to its nostalgic details, every corner tells a story. It's an ode to finding beauty in imperfection, championing second chances and creating spaces that resonate with the soul. For Walker, the magic of Mergozzo is enduring.

As with her fashion philosophy, the home is less about chasing trends and more about cherishing the enduring and the meaningful. It's a reminder that good design isn't just about aesthetics, it's about the life lived within.

LIVING ROOM

The charm lies in an eclectic mix of market finds and thoughtful details. Wicker chairs and a vintage ottoman bring a rustic warmth to the space, while rugs from the 1980s Missoni collection add vibrant color and pattern. A former sewing machine table, transformed into a console, exemplifies the creative upcycling at the heart of the home. The shelving, also sourced from a market, further enhances the nostalgic aesthetic. Completing the look are playful wall lamps by Servomuto, an Italian contemporary brand, adding a touch of modernity to the room's timeless vibe.





DINING ROOM

The dining room is a harmonious blend of vintage charm and playful ingenuity. Hanging lights sourced from a Milanese shop provide soft, understated illumination, while a characterful ottoman – rescued from a street corner and recovered – adds a personal touch. Market-sourced chairs and a sturdy table anchor the room with vintage appeal, complemented by a standing light that brings a hint of nostalgia. The *pièce de résistance* is a wall adorned with vintage plates repurposed as whimsical art – a labor of love that turned hours of meticulous arrangement into a delightful focal point.



BEDROOM

The bedroom exudes a tranquil, midcentury charm. The beds, original to the house, are complemented by artwork found on Etsy that speaks to Walker's personal style. A side table sourced from a market adds a functional yet quirky touch, while the walls are wrapped in vintage midcentury wallpaper, carefully chosen to echo the era and infuse the space with authenticity.

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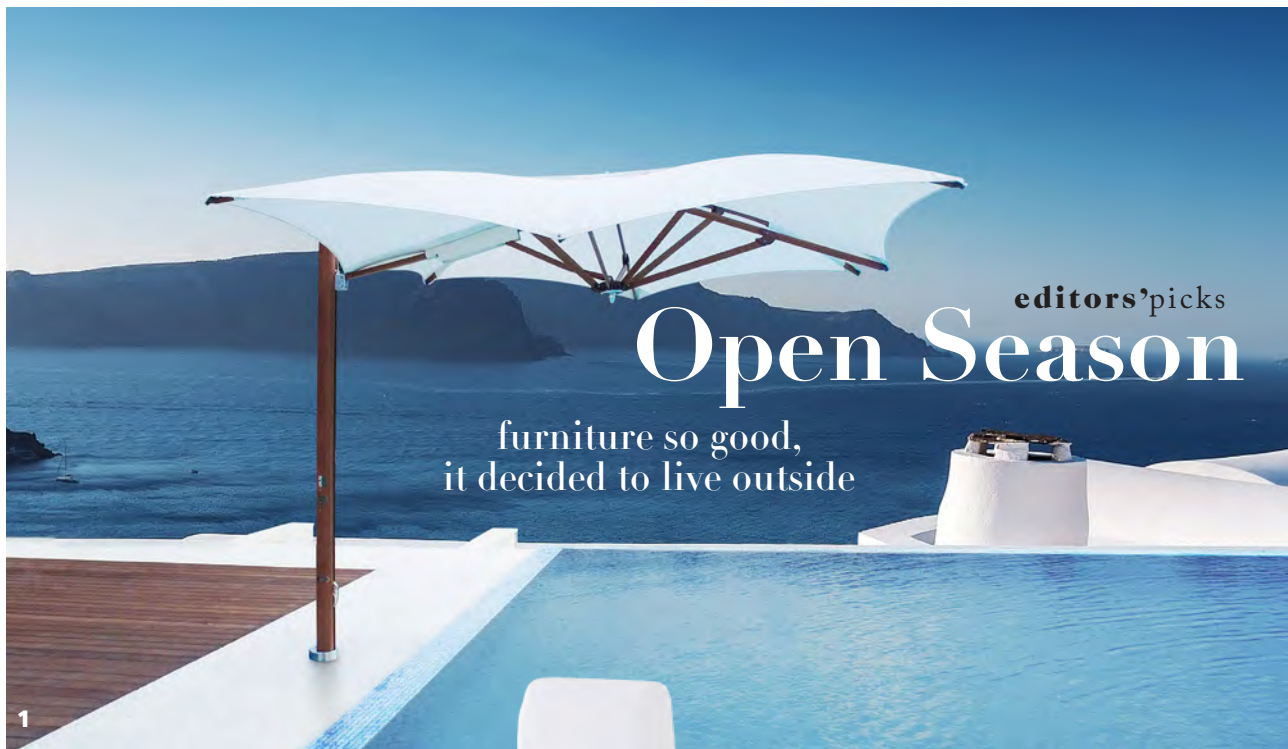




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editors' picks

Open Season

furniture so good,
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2



4



7



6



5



1 **TUUCI** Ocean Master MAX
Manta Cantilever tuuci.com

2 **ARTEFACTO** MOH Collection

artefacto.com 3 **B&B ITALIA**

OUTDOOR Erica Collection

beitalia.com 4 **HARBOUR**

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shopharbour.com 5 **WALTERS**

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BOBOIS Meigetsu end tables

by Kenzo Takada

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Bold Tradition

Interior Design:
The Rath Project
Photography: Tim Lenz

Trading bright city lights for leafy suburban streets, a fashion stylist and her family left Manhattan's Tribeca neighborhood behind to plant new roots in a 4,000-square-foot Center Hall Colonial in Bronxville, New York. But while the nearly century-old home they purchased was rich in architectural detail, it was "very beige," according to interior designer Diane Rath, who notes the monotone surroundings simply didn't suit her clients. "They are all about color, pattern and quirky, unique pieces," she explains, "which is exactly why they came to us."

The plan for the interiors was to honor the details that made the home special, while modernizing their treatment to create spaces that were at once elevated and whimsical. "As a fashion stylist, she has an impeccable editing eye," Rath shares of her client. "The first day we met, before any plans were in motion, she asked me what I thought of the color teal. From that moment, we knew we were about to create something magical."

FOYER/LIVING ROOM Rath and her client sourced and reviewed countless wallpaper options until they found the perfect pattern for the entry. Wallcovering: Scion Living Wallpaper - Ocotillo; Paint: Benjamin Moore - Teal 2055-10; Runner: Kaleen - Boca via Redi-Cut Carpets & Rugs; Hanging light: Jonathan Adler - Vienna Globe; Console tables: Studio McGee for Target; Sofa: Anthropologie - Dorsey Corinne.

DINING ROOM Rath notes the home's design "struck a balance between bold aesthetics, functionality and family-friendly practicality." Wallcovering: Harlequin (Sanderson Design Group) - Melora; Dining table: TOV Furniture - Arianna 72" round; Dining chairs: Vintage find via Darien Design Center; Area rug: Colonial Mills - Houndstooth Tweed.



Designer Diane Rath dresses historic architectural details

Rath notes that this home, like many of those built in the Northeast in the earlier half of the 20th century, possessed an inherent beauty. “When encountering such homes, our role is to preserve and highlight their unique details, not to strip them away.” In the case of this home, the designer points to the employment of contemporary wallpaper that nods to traditional patterns, modern lighting that blends seamlessly with traditional details and paint and finish choices, such as high gloss or lacquer, that further accentuate the home’s architectural features and bring them to life in unexpected ways. “Pairing these elements with textured furniture selections like burnout velvet, and heirloom pieces, such as a wood upright piano, creates a harmonious marriage of materials and design choices from different eras, striking the perfect balance between tradition and modernity,” she explains.

With four young kids and a love for hosting friends and family, practicality was also key for this home. The focus was on making bold statements with furnishings and floor coverings, while ensuring they could stand up to the demands of an active household. The budget was strategically cut back in areas more prone to wear and tear, while drama was introduced through elements like lighting.

Truly a collaborative effort, the home reflects a unique perspective on how fun and exciting color and pattern combinations can be. “Mixing styles, price points and periods is a hallmark for both of us,” Rath notes of herself and her client.

– JENNIFER QUAIL



COLLECTED LIVES

The closet in the primary bedroom is clad in a geometric wallpaper Goralnick designed for Flavor Paper.

THE VINTAGE TREASURES AND MODERN SOUL OF

INTERDISCIPLINARY DESIGNER
BARRY GORALNICK

TEXT THOMAS CONNORS
PHOTOGRAPHY ALAN BARRY
STYLING/INTERIORS BARRY GORALNICK



The well-stocked library is equipped with comfortable seating, including a Milano Sleeper Sofa.
A Choros Chandelier by Goralnick for Visual Comfort hangs overhead.

Those of us with a taste for the daring expect the extreme in literature and art. We prefer Thomas Pynchon to Tom Wolfe, and Marina Abramović to David Hockney. Yet when it comes to interiors, all but the most radically inclined will opt for the familiar over the avant-garde. But home design is not an either/or proposition – a choice between chintz and camelback sofas and the likes of, say, architect Paul Rudolph’s dizzying home on New York’s Beekman Place, with its 27 different floor levels. There is a middle – not *middling* – ground, where the talented and self-possessed show the rest of us what going your own way can look like.

The Chelsea loft of architect and designer Barry Goralnick and his husband, writer Keith Gordon, is the real deal. Forged from a masterful understanding of scale, proportion, mass and volume, and shot through with a kind of wonderful recklessness, it projects a powerful air of authenticity. Boldly self-assured, reveling in disparity, its life-embracing dynamism is a beauty that appears as much random as composed.

COLLECTED LIVES

Vibrant hues and lively geometry play an especially keen role here. “I have a deep appreciation for both color and pattern, which have the power to enhance and draw attention to striking architectural elements,” declares Goralnick. “In designing our apartment, I aimed to balance the industrial feel of the loft with the warmth and intimacy of a cozy home. Each space has its own unique color story, yet they flow seamlessly together as you move from one room to the next. Pattern serves a dual purpose, highlighting the specific details of each space while unifying the overall design.”



The cork flooring in the kitchen is easy on the feet; above hangs a Hatton Chandelier by Goralnick for Visual Comfort.



A Tony Duquette chandelier – featured on the cover of *House Beautiful* in the 1950s – hangs above a midcentury dining table.

Goralnick's fearless embrace of color and pattern is evident everywhere. The living room sports two of his own Greta Swivel Chairs in a searing shade of blue; brass-framed chairs from the 1970s, done up in a wavy undulating pattern against a bright-orange ground; and a 1940s Osvaldo Borsani armchair upholstered in purple velvet. A brown-and-orange palette evocative of the 1970s dominates the library. “The custom wallpaper I created between the kitchen and dining area is oversize, architecturally defining the open, floating kitchen, while artistically complementing the scale of the carpet beneath the dining table. The wallpaper’s gold accents add glamour to the visual dialogue, paying homage to the Tony Duquette chandelier.” The patterns on furniture, custom bedding and pillows range from classic designs inspired by fashion (think Christian Lacroix) to 1960s psychedelia and photo-printed pixels.

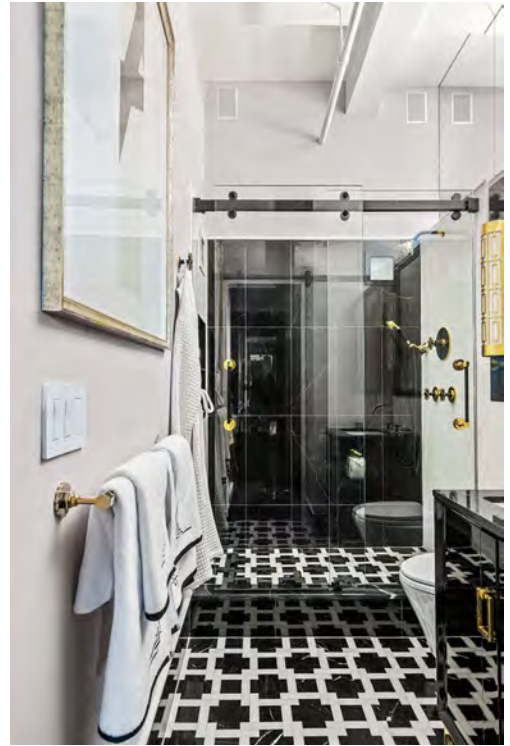
COLLECTED LIVES



The kitchen is wrapped in a bold, Goralnick-designed purple-and-gold mylar wallpaper.



With its hues of orange, blue and purple, the living room is downright electric. Vintage Italian sconces frame a 1950s canvas by Miles Forst, a student of Hans Hofmann.



This guest bathroom is a chic study in black steel and polished brass for Goralnick's James Collection for Watermark.

An art collector since his teens, Goralnick freely mixes a range of materials throughout the home. In the living room, you'll find a valuable 19th-century portrait of an actor playing Hamlet by Antoine Goyers and a pretty but inexpensive classical painting purchased from a country antique shop. Goralnick follows a similar approach when it comes to furnishings. "No period dominates," he asserts. "From French 40s and midcentury to neoclassical and modern, all create a dialogue. Guests often find themselves captivated by the layers of patterns and textures, discovering new details with each visit," relates Goralnick. "My goal was to create a memorable, approachable space unlike any other – an apartment that feels alive with visual interest and personality, yet comfortable to live and entertain in."

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Suspended animation



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BRUGES, BELGIUM

Isolation. Such a fearsome word. A sad, cold word, conjuring confinement, withdrawal, aloneness. All true, perhaps, when we’re talking about trials of the heart or shackling of the mind, but when we ponder the physical world, when we think of how things look – a solitary tree against a morning sky, Georgia O’Keeffe’s hands shot by Alfred Stieglitz – isolation is anything but.

The canal-side home of Joël Buseyne and Gert Sturm in Bruges, Belgium, is an eye-stunning concatenation of singular vistas and tableaux, a finely calibrated environment in which a range of art and objects – an Orientalist image by 19th-century painter Nathaniel Sichel, a narwhal tusk, Rosenthal tableware from the 1970s – make for a minimalist cabinet of curiosities. Situated in the space with fine deliberation, they combine to create an uncommon sense of abundance.

Dating from the 17th century, the property had long ago morphed into something an old burgher would never recognize. Converted to a doctor’s home and office in the 1960s, it was ripe for renovation. “From the ground up, we replaced electrical and plumbing systems, installed new floors, and reimagined the flow of the house with a more logical layout,” describes Buseyne. “We also introduced custom-designed bathrooms and a new kitchen, all while staying true to the building’s essence. We were meticulous in our choice of materials, selecting only those that were timeless and of the highest quality. Every decision was guided by a respect for the home’s original era and its enduring character. This approach allowed us to blend modern comforts with historical integrity, creating a space that feels both contemporary and deeply rooted in history.”

Before taking up residence here, Buseyne lived in a 19th-century neo-Gothic mansion, while Sturm’s previous digs leaned toward Art Deco. “Despite these differences in style,” relates Buseyne, “we both shared a deep appreciation for thoughtful design and a belief in the importance of blending aesthetics with function.”

TEXT THOMAS CONNORS PHOTOGRAPHY CLAUDE SMEKENS + MAGDA DE SMET



**A sense of stillness
and wonder pervades
this artfully composed
Belgian home**

A 19th-century marble figure stands near the reflecting pool that punctuates a patio situated between the kitchen and dining room.



The grand salon – with its Nathaniel Sichel painting, narwhal tusk and ancient Roman torso – epitomizes the homeowners' ability to mix wildly disparate treasures.



The primary bedroom, with a 19th-century Swedish Biedermeier commode, a painting by 19th-century artist Edouard Joseph Dantan and a pair of vessels from the 5th century BCE.



Above The kitchen island is made of lacquered wood and topped with a composite marble surface. The portrait is by François Kinsoen. A silver service tray holds a tableware set from the 1970s, designed by Bjørn Wiinblad for Rosenthal. *Left* The 16th-century Italian cabinet in the dining room features terrazzo marble and semiprecious stones.



Interior designers and serious collectors with a love of art and history, the couple enveloped the home in muted hues, allowing their

disparate possessions to occupy these rooms with assurance. “To create contrast,” notes Sturm, “we relied on textured elements rather than starkly contrasting walls. Complementary colors, carefully chosen for their warmth and depth, provide balance and harmony.”

When it comes to orchestrating art and furnishings, their sense of balance and harmony is far from textbook. “We’ve developed a natural sense of what works in a space and what doesn’t,” observes Buseyne. “For instance, while symmetry often feels safe, asymmetry can create a more dynamic and engaging energy. We enjoy challenging traditional notions of style, juxtaposing objects from different periods – for example, pairing early Egyptian art with a modern masterpiece.”

This approach makes for surprising, yet wholly engaging encounters. There’s a fine fellowship between the strict geometry of the balustrade-free stairway and the bulbous, prehistoric sandstone formation perched on a jet-black plinth at the first landing. In the dining room, a bright-orange wall piece by a local artist hangs on a black-lacquered wall, with a 1st-century AD Roman marble standing nearby. The honey hue of a Swedish Biedermeier chest, and the sepia tone of a canvas by 19th-century French classicist Édouard Joseph Dantan, warm up a bedroom. The non-sense kitchen, equipped with a reasonably scaled island, is graced with a portrait of a lady by François Kinsoen, the Bruges-born artist who became court painter to the Bonaparte family. The couple’s appreciation for contrast extends even to the primary bathroom, clad in marble, with emerald-green-lacquered walls and floor-to-ceiling mirrors.

Exercising a respect for restraint with a reverence for the inherent qualities of choice materials, and guided by a sure vision for how to live with the things they love, Buseyne and Sturm have created a home that speaks eloquently to the past while standing unmistakably in the here and now.



Above The reception room, with antique oak parquet flooring, a 17th-century Italian painting, and a candelabrum designed by renowned Parisian craftsman, Pierre-Philippe Thomire.

Left/Below An ancient statue of Hercules, draped in a lion's skin, stands in the primary bathroom, clad in Calacatta marble.



ÎLE SAINT-GERMAIN, FRANCE

Designer Marie Uzeel
coined the phrase
Landifornie
to describe her
signature mix of
French grace and
California ease

TEXT CARA GIBBS PHOTOGRAPHY YANN DERET

THE LIVING ROOM REFLECTS UZEEL'S KNACK FOR LAYERING HISTORY AND ARTISTRY. SHE REWORKED THE FIREPLACE, ONCE ASYMMETRICAL, INTO A HARMONIOUS FOCAL POINT BY CUTTING DOWN THE TRUMEAU AND ADDING A CUSTOM BASE. OVERHEAD, MAISON SARAH LAVOINE'S GOLDEN CEILING LIGHTS LEND A WARM GLOW TO COFFEE TABLES FROM LABERGÈRE-VAUBAN AND A SOFA DISCOVERED AT THE FLEA MARKET. THE ROOM'S STATEMENT SEATING INCLUDES BRASILIA LEATHER ARMCHAIRS BY SCHMIEDER. LARGE BLACK-AND-WHITE PHOTOGRAPHS BY BASTIAAN WOUTD, SOURCED FROM SOUFIANE ZARIB IN MARRAKECH, BRING A COSMOPOLITAN EDGE, WHILE CURTAINS FROM CARAVANE SOFTEN THE SPACE.



Paris, reimagined



"If

I could, I'd live facing the Atlantic Ocean all year round," confesses Parisian designer Marie Uzeel, the dynamic interior architect who turned her home on Île Saint-Germain into an elegant fusion of Californian cool and Parisian sophistication. This highly coveted enclave just outside Paris, known for its artistic vibrancy and architectural charm, served as the perfect canvas for Uzeel's ambitious vision: a family retreat that exudes warmth, creativity and a distinctly vacation-like ambiance. From the moment she acquired the 1990s-era 2,368-square-foot house, Uzeel was determined to make it her own. "It had great proportions but didn't suit our lifestyle or my tastes," she explains. The only plausible solution? Demolishing everything to start afresh. What emerged is a luminous and playful sanctuary that seamlessly bridges urban living with a coastal spirit.

Upon entry, you're greeted by Uzeel's signature color: pink. "It's a soothing color that transports me," she shares. From the polished concrete of the kitchen to the custom wallpaper in the primary suite, pink reigns supreme. It's not the saccharine hue one has grown to expect, but rather a nuanced palette balanced by dark wood carpentry and bold vintage pieces. A passionate advocate for secondhand treasures, Uzeel sourced many of her home's furnishings from the legendary Saint-Ouen flea market. Iconic finds like the De Sede Terrazza sofa and a Saarinen table lend a sense of timeless character to her interiors. "Vintage items bring soul to a space – the little twists that make all the difference," she muses. Whether it's a pair of leather armchairs or the mural behind her bed created by a painter friend, the interior fabric of this home is deeply personal with a story at every touch.

IN THE DINING AND KITCHEN AREA,

FUNCTIONALITY MEETS FLAIR. UZEEL DESIGNED CUSTOM BANQUETTES UPHOLSTERED IN PIERRE FREY LINEN TO CREATE A COZY, COHESIVE DINING NOOK. CHAIRS FROM MAISONJAUNE STUDIO, REUPHOLSTERED IN CASAMANCE FABRIC, SURROUND A SAARINEN TABLE FOR A TIMELESS CENTERPIECE. THE ROOM'S PINK WAXED-CONCRETE FLOOR FROM MERCADIER UNITES THE DESIGN, WHILE BLACK-AND-WHITE PHOTOGRAPHY FROM LA HUNE AND A TEXTURED SOUFIANE ZARIB RUG ADD LAYERS OF VISUAL INTEREST. RADIATORS FROM ACOVA BLEND SEAMLESSLY INTO THE VIBRANT YET GROUNDED AESTHETIC.





THE KITCHEN IS A JOYFUL CELEBRATION OF CRAFT AND COLOR. ZELLIGE TILES FROM CARRÉMENT VICTOIRE AND PINK PAINT IN MERCADIER'S PALACE SHADE FORM A LIVELY BACKDROP TO BESPOKE CABINETRY CRAFTED BY A PORTUGUESE CARPENTER. WALNUT CHERNER BAR STOOLS, SOURCED FROM SCANDINAVIA DESIGN, ADD WARMTH, WHILE SMEG APPLIANCES PROVIDE A SLEEK, FUNCTIONAL FINISH. ONCE ENCLOSED BY GLASS PARTITIONS, THE KITCHEN NOW FEELS OPEN AND INVITING, A TRUE HEART OF THE HOME.

UZEEL'S BEDROOM IS A SERENE SANCTUARY STEEPED IN TEXTURE AND PERSONAL TOUCHES. DOMINIQUE BOUILLON'S CUSTOM PATINAED WALLPAPER CREATES A DRAMATIC BACKDROP, COMPLEMENTED BY NIGHTSTANDS FOUND AT THE CHATOU FAIR. ABOVE THE BED, A LARGE PHOTOGRAPH OF A JAPANESE LANDSCAPE FROM LA HUNE ADDS A SENSE OF CALM. THE BED ITSELF IS DRESSED IN SOFT LINEN FROM COULEUR CHANVRE, ACCENTED WITH THROWS AND CUSHIONS FROM MAISON DE VACANCES. PINK ARMCHAIRS FROM GALERIE GLUSTIN AND AN INDIAN THROW FROM SIMRANE COMPLETE THE ROOM WITH A MIX OF WARMTH AND INDIVIDUALITY.





THE BATHROOM COMBINES TIMELESS ELEGANCE WITH MODERN FUNCTIONALITY. A FREESTANDING CLAWFOOT TUB FROM HUDSON REED SERVES AS A CENTRAL FEATURE, PAIRED WITH A TOSCANE ET TRADITION SINK AND ARCHIBATH FAUCETS. MIRRORS FROM AME AT CARAVANE AND WALL SCONCES BY DCW EDITIONS OFFER PRACTICAL BEAUTY, WHILE THE CLEAN LINES AND THOUGHTFUL MATERIALS ELEVATE THE OVERALL DESIGN.

Despite its bold aesthetic, the house remains firmly rooted in practicality – a necessity for a family of four (plus a dog and a cat). The ground floor’s open plan allows sunlight to flood the interiors, while upstairs, the children’s bedrooms lead to a verdant rooftop garden. “Nothing in the furniture or accessories is too delicate,” she notes, ensuring that her sons can play freely without disturbing her work. The garden itself is a marvel of transformation. Once a stark concrete courtyard, it now bursts with exotic plants inspired by the Cap Ferret homes on France’s southwest coast. “The only thing I regret not including is cacti,” she admits, laughing, and adding that Paris’s climate isn’t forgiving to desert flora.

Uzeel’s favorite space, the kitchen, encapsulates the home’s signature aesthetic. “It’s small but functional, an all-pink box that’s very *me*.” Like the rest of the house, this room is designed for connection – whether hosting guests or simply spending time with family. “Our home reflects my personality and values as a designer,” she adds. From the playful use of color to the emphasis on vintage craftsmanship, every element feels intentional yet unpretentious. The project wasn’t without its challenges. Reworking the first-floor layout – determining which walls to keep and how to optimize light – was a pivotal moment in the design process. “Once we decided it would be the parents’ floor, everything else flowed naturally,” she recalls.

Uzeel affectionately describes her aesthetic as *Landifornie*, a marriage of Californian relaxation and French elegance. Living on Île Saint-Germain, with its eclectic mix of modern architecture and quaint charm, inspired her to embrace this duality. “It’s close to Paris yet feels like its own world,” she describes, marveling at the freedom this unique setting afforded her. For Uzeel, design is as much about evolution as it is about creation. Though she considers her home a finished project, she remains open to change. “I’m always tempted to buy new pieces,” admits the designer, though her dream of a secondary home in Cap Ferret might soon take precedence. Until then, her Île Saint-Germain retreat remains a testament to her talent – a space that’s both a personal haven and an inspiring example of design ingenuity. “Be bold!” she advises anyone looking to create inspiring spaces of their own. “Embrace color and strong pieces and follow your taste without fear.”

The interior fabric of this home is deeply personal with a story at every touch.





"The only thing I regret not including is cacti," Urzeel admits, laughing, and adding that Paris's climate isn't forgiving to desert flora.

THE COURTYARD FEATURES PETITE FRITURE CHAIRS DESIGNED BY STUDIO BRICHET-ZIEGLER ADD A TOUCH OF CONTEMPORARY DESIGN, WHILE THOUGHTFUL DETAILS LIKE A PAPER VASE FROM SERAX AND A WICKER PLATTER FROM CÔTÉ TABLE INFUSE THE SPACE WITH CHARM. LUSH EXOTIC PLANTS, ENVISIONED TO ECHO THE COASTAL AMBIANCE.



REAP WHAT YOU SEW



Walls are covered in 50 x 70-centimeter (approximately 20" x 28") sheets of Le Monde Sauvage's block-printed rice paper pattern Triangle noir. At right is an old butcher's table repurposed as desk and a Bertoia chair.

H

aving a country getaway to retreat to from the city sounds like an idyllic solution to the frenetic pace of contemporary life. Nevertheless, Béatrice Laval – owner of Le Monde Sauvage, a 55-year-old Paris-based design firm that sells lighting, textiles, wallpapers, rugs and furnishings through various retail outlets and an online store – was initially resistant to the idea when her film executive husband suggested buying a 19th-century farm in the Forest of Fontainebleau. “I was not too keen on the idea,” she admits, “opening the shutters, closing the shutters every weekend.” It seemed like a lot of work.

Additionally, the main buildings they would eventually combine into a 2,155-square-foot, 4-bedroom home (with additional dormitory) had been abandoned for 40 years, “so we needed to do everything.” For starters, that involved excavating down into the newer building (c. 1870) to even out the 28-inch difference in floor level between it and what Laval calls “the village house.” A breezeway where the farmers had stored their hay joined the two structures, which the couple enclosed to gain indoor space. Here they installed enormous windows offering generous views of the gardens.

“To me, what is difficult in a full renovation is not to erase what the house is,” observes Laval. “It was not a particularly exciting space, but it had a history and was made of materials we can perhaps not get again.” A case in point is the kitchen, “a place where we all love to be together. We’re a cooking family.” (Both their children are grown but visit often.) The earthenware hexagonal tile floors were original and very typical of the area, but they were dirty and damaged. “We could have made a new floor,” Laval admits, “but it would destroy the spirit of the house. Modern materials do not have the same character.”

Laval opted instead to remove the tiles, clean them up and reinstall those that were still in good shape. But that left about 10 square feet missing. Serendipitously, another farm nearby was replacing floors and selling the same size tile, so the couple bought enough to complete the job.

They relocated existing fireplaces, repurposed doors and beams from the property, painted the pine floors and drenched walls in lime paints mixed with hemp to impart mottling and texture. Of course, Laval tapped Le Monde Sauvage for many textiles, rugs and wallcoverings, and picked up various furnishings from her travels. “I’m attracted to unique things because a house really has to reflect your personality,” she explains.

Weaving a touch
of au courant into
history, French designer
Béatrice Laval
revives the spirit of an
1800s farmhouse



A bed dressed in Le Monde Sauvage's natural upholstery, pillows and linens against a wall painted with hemp-infused lime paint.



The kitchen island, designed by homeowner Laval, was inspired by monumental rocks found in the Forest of Fontainebleau outside. Robert Mallet-Stevens chairs surround a rustic table illuminated by a double globe pendant, which alludes to the moon that rises over the forest.





Hexagonal earthenware tiles are original to the house and underlie a seating area in the kitchen that features a concrete Solid Studio coffee table and a Dunkirk industrial landscape drawing by Caroline Bouyer.

A bathroom in the older "village house" sports green wainscoting, Le Monde Sauvage's Mint Freedom wallpaper and Brigitte sconces from the company's Josephine B. range of wall lights.

Among these singular finds: a painted Romanian trunk and a butcher's table reimagined as a desk in the living room (situated in the newer structure), both from antiques shops in Eastern Europe; a concrete coffee table in the kitchen from French firm Solid Studio; an industrial landscape rendering on the wall above it by Caroline Bouyer; an Ingo Maurer chandelier in the living room; her mother's Robert Mallet-Stevens chairs in the dining area; a red Louis Poulsen pendant in a guest room above a rug her father had brought from China; and so on.

Leaning against the wall atop the painted Romanian cabinet in the living room is a large-scale photograph taken in Udaipur. "India is my spiritual place," Laval notes wistfully. "I've been traveling there for almost 30 years. Time doesn't really exist there, which can be infuriating sometimes. But if you let that go, it's perfect."

One gets the sense that this farm's new incarnation – through its embedded history, natural materials and sensitive renovation – might elicit a similar timelessness for Laval.



Another lime-painted bedroom features a rug Laval's father brought from travels in China, a Louis Poulsen pendant lamp and one of the village house's original fireplaces. The bedside table is a simple stack of old painted drawers.





Sculptor **Lucille
Lewin's**
home in London...

LIVING ROOM

In the heart of Marylebone, Lucille Lewin's home exudes the restrained elegance that defines her work as a sculptor. The once-Victorian school retains its vast proportions and original spirit, with light streaming through immense windows into an open-plan space that feels both expansive and intimate.

figuratively speaking

TEXT CARA GIBBS PHOTOGRAPHY INGRID RASMUSSEN

KITCHEN

The kitchen, defined by clean lines and an earthy palette, reflects Lewin's belief in understated elegance. The space feels open yet grounded, with thoughtful details that prioritize both beauty and practicality.



Form should always follow function...or perhaps the other way around



A closer look at the textures and materials reveals the tactile allure of Lewin's home. Polished stone, raw wood and delicate ceramics sit in quiet conversation, each celebrating the inherent beauty of its form. "The interplay of textures is like a dialogue," she notes, "one that evolves with light and time."



LONDON, ENGLAND

"I let the building dictate how we live," states sculptor Lucille Lewin, her words a quiet manifesto for the delicate interplay of space and sensibility that defines her home in the London borough of Marylebone. Once an early Victorian school, the structure now marries heritage with the minimalistic ethos that infuses her art, creating a residence that whispers rather than shouts – a sanctuary of light, texture and material honesty. Lewin, the founder of the clothing store Whistles and former creative director of Liberty, the designer department store, has spent decades translating ephemeral trends into enduring style. But it was clay – not couture – that ultimately captivated her. A chance visit to a pottery class led to an epiphany, as she recounts, "I fell in love with the smell of the damp, slightly dusty basement studio . . . I pulled off a corner of freshly unwrapped clay and began to make and never stopped."

This sense of organic evolution courses through her home, which she and her husband transformed with the guidance of Seth Stein Architects. The couple respected the building's original identity, embracing its towering ceilings, immense windows and unpretentious charm. "We kept it as a school," Lewin explains. "The ground floor is one enormous room separated from the garden courtyards by glass, retaining the spirit of the playground it once was." Inside, Lewin's aesthetic leans toward serene palettes and tactile materials. "I use a restricted palette of natural neutrals – stone, untreated wood, marble, steel and glass. It's not deliberate – it's a respect for the material, to leave it as natural as possible." This philosophy aligns with her sculptural practice, where porcelain, glass and metal explore narratives of impermanence and regeneration. Her home, like her art, resists excess, offering instead an interplay of light and space that evolves with the seasons.





DINING ROOM

Open to the kitchen, the dining room is a harmonious blend of functionality and artistry. Simple yet striking, the space showcases Lewin's commitment to natural materials like untreated wood and stone. This serene environment provides the perfect backdrop for meaningful gatherings.

OFFICE

Lewin's office is a study in restraint, with carefully chosen pieces that inspire focus without distraction. The room's muted palette and simple furnishings provide a serene setting for her creative process.



Lewin's work is often inspired by grand themes – climate change, artificial intelligence, body dysmorphia – but her home is a meditation on simplicity. Artworks, including her own, are displayed on long shelves that morph with her whims. “We don’t hang paintings,” she states. “It’s all designed to move as summer turns to winter or a new piece arrives from the studio.” That studio, a 45-minute walk away in Bloomsbury, is a deliberate departure from her living space. “I like the separation of work and life. It brings discipline and rhythm to my day.”

When asked about her favorite corner, Lewin doesn’t hesitate. “My bathroom and my daily bath, where I dream awake.” It’s a small indulgence in a life guided by restraint, a moment to drift while surrounded by the serenity she’s so carefully cultivated. As Lewin prepares for an upcoming show with Tristan Hoare Gallery, her home remains aligned with the quiet power of listening – to materials, to architecture, to the gentle call of creativity. “The greatest challenge,” she reflects, “was to leave the building be, not to overdesign it, to respect what it wanted.”

PRIMARY BEDROOM

The primary bedroom offers a tranquil retreat, its design rooted in the same principles of simplicity and natural beauty. Soft textiles and neutral tones create an atmosphere of quiet luxury, while thoughtful details invite relaxation.

"I let the building dictate how we live,"



CHAIR VIGNETTE

This intimate vignette features a sculptural chair positioned thoughtfully against a backdrop of neutral tones. The quiet elegance of the scene reflects Lewin's ability to create moments of pause within her home.



GUEST BEDROOM

The guest bedroom balances comfort and artistry with sculptural accents and a subtle palette. The understated design allows each element to shine while maintaining a cohesive, serene atmosphere.

states sculptor Lucille Lewin.



BATHROOM

Lewin's favorite space, the bathroom, embodies her ethos of lightness and reflection. The soft interplay of natural light and calming materials creates an oasis of tranquility.



Brooklyn Calling

TEXT THOMAS CONNORS PHOTOGRAPHY RIKKI SNYDER INTERIOR DESIGN DAN RAK

The simple façade of the 1880s brownstone.



"In Brooklyn," pitcher Don Drysdale once said, "it was as though you were in your own little bubble. You were all part of one big but very close family, and the Dodgers were the main topic of everybody's conversations, and you could sense the affection people had for you. I don't know that such a thing exists anymore." The Dodgers, of course, left decades ago, and like the rest of New York, the borough has changed dramatically. Certain quarters now sport swanky new residential towers, but the low-rise charm of the place remains.

**Designer Dan Rak
fashions a
family-friendly
home in
Carroll Gardens**

There's a charming, utilitarian character to the entry foyer, where a simple bench sits atop the warm brick floor.



Rak carved out a little entryway on the parlor floor, defined by a muted floral rug from **Loloi**.



The sunlit dining area, set with a concrete table from **Four Hands** and walnut-stained chairs from **Nuevo**.



The architect-designed kitchen opens to a relaxed living room graced with a bay window.

This Carroll Street brownstone, sensitively appointed by Chicago interior designer Dan Rak, puts one in mind of poet Marianne Moore's Brooklyn, when "An atmosphere of privacy, with a touch of diffidence prevailed, as when a neighbor in a furred jacket, veil and gloves would emerge from a four-story house to shop at grocer's or meat-market." Not that Rak has taken a stroll down memory lane or opted for a retro vibe. But with a light touch and a respect for period detail, he has fashioned a home that Brooklyn citizens of past might well feel at ease within.

Rak's clients, a Manhattan couple, bought the two-unit house with their daughter and son-in-law to create a multigenerational home. "They had seen our work in their son's Chicago and Michigan homes and liked that while our work leans more contemporary, it retains a sense of approachability and warmth," describes Rak. "They recognized that the new home called for a more contemporary aesthetic but still wanted to incorporate some of their traditional-leaning possessions, mostly artwork and small items, such as a bench we used in the lower-level landing."

An architect who had planned to live in the house had renovated the 19th-century property before Rak's clients purchased it. **"The architectural elements that were preserved in this home were incredible,"** relates Rak. **"We knew that we needed to take a restrained approach in furnishing it so that those details retained center stage, and thus selected a neutral palette with contrasting textures that created visual interest and a sense of refined comfort. The decision to use white as a foundational color in the walls was driven by the desire for strong contrast with the historic millwork in the doors and floors, and with the warmth of the newer cabinets."**



A hallway bathroom, adorned with a few of the clients' cherished botanicals.



The vertical alignment of sink, mirror and lighting fixture creates a greater feeling of space in this compact powder room.

ZIP CODE

High ceilings, tall windows, rich millwork and handsome fireplaces give the owner's unit a sense-pleasing solidity. Rak's choices reflect and complement these enviable details, creating an understated environment tailored to everyday life. The dining area – set with a concrete table from Four Hands and walnut-stained, rubber wood chairs from Nuevo – is perfect for a solo lunch or convivial dinner party. Rak fashioned a foyer area on the parlor floor, outfitting the space with a round, floral rug from Loloi and diminutive occasional tables and a reeded pouf from Four Hands. Responding to the existing walnut cabinets and gray quartzite countertops in the kitchen, he populated the adjacent living room with casual, earth-toned pieces. Trendy and buoyed by tech, Brooklyn is giving Manhattan a run for its money as a place to live. But sitting here, “hip” seems far away, and home is what it’s all about.

TAKEAWAYS



**IN THE SWEDISH COUNTRYSIDE,
A HISTORIC SCHOOLHOUSE GETS A SECOND LIFE AS A WARM AND INVITING HOME –
WHERE LESSONS OF THE PAST BLEND WITH EFFORTLESS CHARM**

TEXT THOMAS CONNORS PHOTOGRAPHY INGALILL SNITT STYLIST GILL RENLUND
INTERIOR DESIGN SARA AND JÖRGEN AHDRIAN BRORSSON OF DUNKE DESIGN



The entrance hall, with an old department store display case and an eye-popping Orbit Chair from District Eight.



William Morris wallpaper and a repurposed Gucci umbrella create a cocooning effect in this guest room.

There is no word for it – that strange feeling of walking into a classroom long after one’s school days are past. Everything seems smaller: the desks where you once squirmed, the blackboard that seemed like a dark, devouring universe when you stood there and struggled (in front of *everyone*) to diagram a sentence or make sense of some equation. Imagine, then, a student returning to this former schoolhouse in Kullaberg, Sweden.

Dating from 1928, the building had been repurposed as a B and B when Sara and Jörgen Ahdrian Brorsson acquired it a few years ago. The sewing room and gymnasium on the second floor were converted into bedrooms, and the first-floor classrooms were made into a kitchen and living room. While one can still imagine kids trooping up and down the wide staircase, in its current incarnation, it’s hard to believe a student may have once sidled her way to teacher’s pet within these walls.

The Brorssons operate Dunke Design, offering a selection of contemporary furniture and storage systems (plus chic air hockey and ping-pong tables), so creating a stylish home here came naturally. But it took a little tweaking to get things just right. “When we moved in, we set up our dining room pieces in the new kitchen, but they looked like dollhouse furniture,” shares Jörgen. “The huge spaces required significantly larger pieces, a totally different range of furniture and decorative items.” The couple’s site-specific inventory includes two couches in the living room (an iconic black leather model by Børge Mogensen and Toan Nguyen’s Stilt Sofa from District Eight) and a Faifo dining table in burnt fir, also from District Eight. A version of the classic, cast-iron Akron stool stands three abreast at the kitchen island. “We furnished our home with respect and admiration for the well made, with respect for craftsmen and their efforts,” states Sara.



A Gucci handbag, Safic clock made in Germany and a Fog & Mørup lamp form a fine vignette in the primary bedroom.



Singular pieces – a vintage, glass-fronted display case in the entrance hall, a set of old, wooden movie house seats at the top of the stairs, a Gucci umbrella hanging from the ceiling as a light shade – add a warm, lived-in layer to these interiors. In the kitchen, where white tiled walls and a simple but expansive black island project an almost industrial vibe, original schoolhouse pendants are paired with unfinished brass cylinders from Sweden's Konsthantverk.

The Brorssons took their time making the old schoolhouse their own. Although they didn't alter the building's structure, they did turn a 60s-era kitchen on the second floor into a third bedroom and renovated the ceilings and walls throughout. When they moved in, almost every space was painted black. "We added color to every room and recovered the stoneware flooring, which was sourced locally from the nearby town of Höganäs, known for its production of bricks and ceramics," describes Jörgen. The two are now in the process of restoring the nearly century-old window frames, and they are committed to caring for them gently.

After years in Stockholm, the couple is completely at home in the countryside, enjoying such simple pleasures as the sound of a bird. "It is sad that you need to move to be able to notice birdsong," muses Sara. "The birds were obviously singing in the city, too, but that orchestra played to empty stands."



A Dunke Design wall unit is paired with a vintage stool.





THE CUSTOM ISLAND WAS
MADE BY THE DANISH
KITCHEN COMPANY, KOLON.

"THE HUGE SPACES REQUIRED SIGNIFICANTLY LARGER PIECES, A TOTALLY DIFFERENT RANGE OF FURNITURE AND DECORATIVE ITEMS." THE COUPLE'S SITE-SPECIFIC INVENTORY INCLUDES TWO COUCHES IN THE LIVING ROOM (AN ICONIC BLACK LEATHER MODEL BY BØRGE MOGENSEN AND TOAN NGUYEN'S STILT SOFA FROM DISTRICT EIGHT) AND A FAIFO DINING TABLE IN BURNT FIR, ALSO FROM DISTRICT EIGHT.







EXIT

last words

René Magritte would be pleased. Channeling a little surrealist expression for your evening out – or simply for your home – a whimsical series of lampshades hits the scene courtesy of Christopher Farr Cloth. Handcrafted in Dollis Hill, London, the new collection puts the label's bestselling fabrics to functional, expressive use.

christopherfarrcloth.com



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